

over. “*Ma che porti?*” What on earth are you wearing? “*Mentre cucino, faccio il bucato.*” While I’m cooking, I’ll do your laundry. She heads to my bedroom. “Where is de machine?”

I’m spinning from the whirlwind of my mother’s arrival. She’s 64 years old and still I can’t keep up with her. I lean against the wall to catch my breath.

“Ma,” I say when I feel steadier, “I don’t have any bleach.”

She hollers her response from my room. “*So’ portato un po’ da casa.*” I brought some from home.

Of course she would, I say under my breath, and head into my bedroom. There I see Ma, bent at the waist, her calf muscles stretching as she picks through my clothes, sorting them by colour. I move closer to Ma, feel the heat emanating from her body; watch the swift movement of her arms. I take a deep breath, bend down on my knees; help Ma sort through my laundry.

Teresa C. Luciani, Ph.D. is a writer, researcher and university instructor living in Toronto. This story comes out of her arts-informed doctoral thesis called, “On Women’s Domestic Work and Knowledge: Growing up in an Italian Kitchen,” 2006.

KAY R. EGINTON

The Open Field

A ragtag of late October leaves
The cold northwest wind across
The open field,
The field here,

Protected, still,
The northwest, the wind,
The cold, oh,
The open field.

Kay Eginton lives in Iowa City. Her poetry is often published in the state-wide journal, Lyrical Iowa. Her poetry book, Poems, was published by Penfield Press.

AMBER FALES

On Becoming A Nurse

My mother worries about the things I’ll carry:
the pain in the faces
the crying voices
the smell of shit and vomit.

My mother worries about what will live on in my dreams:
the red blood everywhere
the black eyes of the dying
the yellow skin of the sick.

My mother worries about the thin walls of my white skin
and what it might let in.
She does not know what I have somehow already seen
and heard
and smelled
and dreamed.
And what I know:

I know
the heartache of knowing
and doing nothing
slowly kills,
but the heartache of doing
slowly heals.

Amber Fales is 27 years old and lives with her partner and two cats. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree in English in May 2006. She is currently working in childcare. Summer 2007 she will embark upon a career in nursing that will hopefully lead to midwifery or neonatal care. Writing has always been a part of her life, and she expects it always will.